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HOUSE COUNCIL PASSES COMPREHENSIVE BACKGROUND SCREENING PROTECTIONS FOR VULNERABLE FLORIDIANS

TALLAHASSEE, FL – The Criminal & Civil Justice Policy Council, chaired by Representative William Snyder (R-Stuart), today passed legislation to close loopholes in the background screening process to help keep criminals and predators away from Florida’s most vulnerable citizens.

“Floridians expect that their vulnerable loved ones will be treated with the care and respect they deserve,” said Chairman Snyder. “A large part of that expectation is that the people hired as caregivers will not be criminals looking to prey on their family members.”

This legislation (PCB CCJP 10-04) increases protections for vulnerable Floridians. The protections included in this proposal provide that no one can begin work with children, disabled adults or adults over 65 years of age until after a background screening is completed and the applicant is found to be qualified. Any exemptions that are made for prior offenses cannot be made for at least three years following all sentencing sanctions, and any exemptions that are made can only be approved by the agency head. More importantly, the legislation provides that sexual predators will never receive an exemption to work with vulnerable populations.

“Protecting Florida’s most vulnerable citizens is at the very heart of why government exists, and this legislation represents an important part of attaining that goal,” concluded Snyder.

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